DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 227 585 EA 015 508

AUTHOR Patterson, Alan M.; Gaynor, Alan K.
TITLE Moral Reasoning and the Moral Actions of School Administrators.
PUB DATE 22 Oct 81
NOTE 38p.; Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the Northeastern Educational Research Association (Ellenville, NY, October 22, 1981).
PUB TYPE Speeches/Conference Papers (150) -- Reports - Research/Technical (143)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Administrative Problems; *Administrator Attitudes; Administrators; Elementary Secondary Education; *Moral Development; Moral Values; *Problem Solving; Value Judgment
IDENTIFIERS Defining Issues Test; Moral Action Choice Test (Patterson); *Moral Reasoning

ABSTRACT

Fifty school administrators completed Rest's Defining Issues Test (DIT) and Patterson's Moral Action Choice Test (MACT) as part of a study to determine how Kohlberg's theory of moral development might apply to day-to-day administrative decision-making. The respondents were presented with hypothetical moral dilemmas and asked to explain what they believed they should do, what they actually would do, and what thinking lay behind their responses. The study findings supported the hypothesis that the nature of administrators' responses to the hypothetical problems of the MACT would relate to their levels of moral development as revealed by the DIT scores. The data did not indicate that the administrators who internalized social rules exhibited greater discrepancies between their "should" and "would" responses than did either those treating rules as external or those developing rules from self-chosen principles. As expected, no association was found between DIT and MACT scores when critical moral issues were not confronted. The major implication of the study, according to the authors, is that as problems are conceived less abstractly and more concretely the decisions as to what "should" be done become more strongly dependent on the particular social contexts affected. (PGD)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED227585

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

X This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.
Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official NIE position or policy.

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY
Alan K. Gaynor
TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

MORAL REASONING AND THE MORAL ACTIONS OF SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS

Alan M. Patterson
Barrington (R.I.) Public Schools

Alan K. Gaynor
Boston University

Paper Presented at the Annual Meeting
of the Northeastern Educational Research Association
Ellenville, New York October 22, 1981

EA 015 508

MORAL REASONING AND THE MORAL ACTIONS OF SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS

Alan M. Patterson
Barrington (R.I.) Public Schools

Alan K. Gaynor
Boston University

PURPOSES

The recent interest in Lawrence Kohlberg's theory of moral development springs not only from the general tenor of a post-Watergate era but from a particular concern for humanistic and principled education as well. In the last two decades alone our society has witnessed a growing demand for clarification of individual rights, from the civil rights legislation of the early 1960's to the proposed Equal Rights Amendment of today.

However, issues of fairness are not confined simply to courtrooms or formal processes of adjudication. Witness the concerns in education, for example, for "educating all children" and "educating the whole child." It is not surprising that a recent Gallup poll showed that fory-five percent of parents of public school children noted the need to emphasize moral education (Hersh, et al., 1979).

Kohlberg's ideas were first introduced in his dissertation in 1958, The Development of Modes of Moral Thinking and Choice in the Years Ten to Sixteen. In brief, these ideas, rooted in the educational philosophy of Dewey and Piaget, define "education for justice" as a modern statement of the Platonic view (Kohlberg, 1970). Like Dewey, Kohlberg (1969, 1971, 1972; Kohlberg and Mayer, 1972) claims that human development in contrast to knowledge acquisition per se, should be the aim of education.

Educational decision-makers are faced with "moral decisions" all the time. This observation is not to suggest that every item which crosses an administrator's desk or every interpersonal encounter involves issues of morality. However, if Kohlberg's theory is applicable, each decision-maker reflects a particular perspective for focusing any situation in which he or she perceives that issues of fairness are at stake. Such situations, in Kohlberg's terms, involve "justice" and, therefore, require that a choice between conflicting claims be made, a choice based on moral judgment.

Do such situations arise for administrators? What issues come to light? How might these issues compete at specific levels of moral development? How do administrators make their decisions? What are the bases of fairness? How clearly are such bases understood and justified by those making these decisions? How consistent is the decision or

action choice with the justification or moral reasoning? These are some of the questions which this study sought to examine?

BACKGROUND

Kohlberg's Theory

Although Kohlberg's theory of moral development may represent a new way in which to analyze human thought and action, the roots of his work are located in other moral philosophers. His use of Socratic thought ("virtue is ultimately one...and its ideal form in justice") has already been acknowledged (Kohlberg, 1970, p. 58). Similarly, this logic surfaces in the categorical imperative of Kant (arguing for the value of life) and the principle of choice by Mill (valuing an open marketplace for the exchange of ideas).

More recently, however, Kohlberg's conception borrows heavily from John Rawls (1971), who clearly defines justice as "fairness." Rawls' definition has two parts: (1) the interpretation of the initial situation of justice, and the problem of choice posed there; and (2) the set of principles upon which a choice is made (p. 15). Kohlberg adopted Rawls' position that principles of justice imply principles of choice by rational persons, and therefore, such concepts can be explained and justified.

In this light, Kohlberg began to study the ways in which people conceive of the distribution of basic rights and obligations in a society. His undertaking represents both a psychological and philosophical quest into the structure of morality. His early conclusion was that "the essential structure of morality is the principle of justice, regulated by concepts of equality and reciprocity":

> Justice is not a rule or set of rules; it is a moral principle. By a moral principle we mean a mode of choosing which is universal, a rule of choosing which we want all people to adopt in all situations.... A moral principle is a principle for resolving competing claims, you versus me, you versus a third party. There is only one principled basis for resolving claims: justice or equality.... A moral principle is not only a rule of action but a reason for action. As a reason for action, justice is called respect for persons. (1970, p. 70)

To assess appropriate methods of moral teaching and learning (i.e., "the psychologist's contribution to moral education"), Kohlberg (Kohlberg and Mayer, 1972, p. 455) retreated from both Skinnerian and Freudian explanations. The Skinnerians, more generally represented as the "cultural transmission school," imply that morality can be taught through environmental messages. "Good boys put their books

away.", is one such maxim from this "bag of virtues." The Freudians, on the other hand, have a "romantic" view, one that sees growth determined by a set of pre-patterned, innate structures. Kohlberg concluded that both of these explanations fail to fit the empirical data and, more significantly, fail to contend with the problem of value relativity and the question of relating the natural *is* to the ethical *ought* (1971, p. 155). For this reason, the values clarification technique *per se* is also not sufficient for "teaching" morality (Colby, 1975; Hersh *et al.*, 1979; Kohlberg and Turiel, 1971).

To provide a sound philosophical and psychological theory based on empirical observation, Kohlberg uses a cognitive-developmental model, based primarily on the works of Dewey (1954) and Piaget (1932). This theory proposes: (1) that moral development is characterized by a set of invariant, qualitative stages; and (2) that the stimulation of development rests on the stimulation of thought (Kohlberg, 1969).

Kohlberg (1971) has theorized that there are three distinct levels of moral thought: pre-conventional, conventional, and post-conventional (principled). Qualitative differences between each level generally reflect a different social perspective, from the concrete individual (pre-conventional), to the peer group or societal (conventional), to the universal ethical (post-conventional).

Differences in levels also reflect differences in the way the individual views his relationship with societal rules and expectations: in Level I, rules are external; Level II, rules are internalized and accepted; Level III, rules emanate from self-chosen principles. Consequently, movement from one level to another represents a cognitive refocusing of what is fair and just, from automatic external rules, to reciprocity in relationships, to individual rights and operating principles.

Within each level are two distinct stages. The second stage is a more advanced, integrated view of the general perspective delineated for each level. Thus, there are *six* stages contained within the three levels. The pre-conventional level consists of Stage 1 (obedience and punishment) and Stage 2 (naively egotistic) orientations; the conventional level, Stage 3 ("good boy") and Stage 4 (authority and rule) orientations; the post-conventional, Stage 5 (contractual legalistic) and Stage 6 (universal ethical) orientations.

RESEARCH TRENDS

Kohlberg's research actually comprises the second phase of moral development studies. The first began with Piaget in 1932. His book, *The Moral Judgment of the Child*, described the construct of moral judgment and provided

features of such thinking.

Piaget's work, however, stands in contrast with other researchers in the field, such as Hartshorne and May (1928), who tried to predict moral behavior. These researchers were interested in finding out if moral behavior was general or situation-specific. They studied the behavior of 11,000 children who were given opportunities to cheat, lie, or steal in a variety of activities such as classroom studies, games, or sports contests. Hartshorne and May found that it was impossible to predict whether a child who cheated on an English test, for example, would also steal money. Their major finding was that variations in the situation produced variations in moral behavior. Piaget, on the other hand, was concerned more with cultural definitions of right and wrong. By studying the organization of thinking, Piaget provided a way to examine subjective values in their own right. His emphasis was more on how people reasoned through moral situations than on the moral action, itself.

In 1958, Kohlberg's dissertation ushered in the second phase of research. Kohlberg used a number of hypothetical moral dilemmas (the Moral Judgment Interview) to elicit open-ended answers from respondents. By using these open-ended dilemmas, Kohlberg was able to identify "hundreds of new characteristics of people's judgments, and organized these features into six stages of development" (Rest, 1979, p. 7). His cognitive-developmental approach, in turn, set in motion two research directions: one, aimed at examining stage properties of moral judgment; the other, aimed at translating developmental ideas into educational practice. Notable among the stage property researches have been cross-sectional studies (Kohlberg, 1969); longitudinal studies (Kohlberg, 1969; Kohlberg and Kramer, 1969); cross-cultural studies (Kohlberg, 1968; Kohlberg and Turiel, 1971); and comprehension studies (Rest, Turiel and Kohlberg, 1969; Rest, 1973; Rest, 1976a).

Kohlberg's theory was transposed into the educational sphere initially through the efforts of one of his graduate students, Moshe Blatt. The so-called "Blatt Effect" (1970), which utilized the discussion of moral dilemmas in the classroom to promote moral development, has been replicated in numerous intervention studies (e.g., Di Stefano, 1976; Paolitto, 1976; Rundle, 1977; Sullivan, 1974; Wasserman, 1977).

Similarly, the "just community" approach has been used in schools (Mosher, 1978; Kohlberg, 1978; Wasserman, 1977), and prisons (Scharf et al., 1973) to promote moral growth by dealing with actual, rather than hypothetical, moral dilemmas. Studies of the prerequisites of moral development (Selman, 1971, 1973; Colby, 1973) also fall in this phase of research.

According to Rest (1979), research which began in the the early 1970's initiated a third phase of work on moral development. Phase III differs from the first two in that

many changes are proposed and explored which are not completely consistent with or anticipated in the earlier formulations. There are four directions within this phase. One has been the study of information-processing variables (e.g., Baldwin and Baldwin, 1970; Driver, Steufert, and Schroder, 1967) to explain developmental differences.

A second direction has been the refinement of the scoring technique by Kohlberg and his colleagues at Harvard. The latest revisions reflect a continuous effort since the 1958 dissertation to analyze more clearly the criteria for moral thinking at each stage. A noteworthy revision has been the substage distinction, particularly in post-conventional thinking (Kohlberg et al., 1975).

A third facet has been the development of the Defining Issues Test (DIT) by Rest (1974), a test distinguished as a valid and reliable assessment of moral judgment.

A fourth set of studies in this present phase of research deals with the relationship between moral judgment and moral action. Hartshorne and May (1928) carried out a series of experiments attempting to find a relationship between what they called "moral knowledge" and behavior. They found that "general moral knowledge measured by tests (which they devised) and the specific behaviors classified as 'deception' (e.g., cheating) are only slightly related" (p. 53). Kohlberg (1969), using similar experiments, found that "people's verbal moral values about honesty have nothing to do with how they act (p. 5).

La Piere (1970) also showed a discrepancy between verbal statements and observed behavior. La Piere made an extensive automobile trip around the United States with a foreign-born Chinese couple. He expected that he would run into difficulty obtaining service in hotels and restaurants, but he was refused only once in over two hundred instances. After the trip, La Piere sent questionnaires to the places he had visited, asking if they would accept "members of the Chinese race as guests in their establishment." Only one respondent said he would.

It can be argued from the research that verbal statements about what is "right" or "wrong" may not always predict actual moral behavior. Damon (1977) decided to focus this type of study by examining the relationship of moral reasoning and moral action with children under several different conditions for distributing rewards.

To test "hypothetical reasoning," children were asked (hypothetically) to divide ten candy bars as rewards for bracelets they might make. Under a second condition, children actually made bracelets and were asked to discuss the basis for dividing the candy bars ("real-life reasoning"). In addition, the same group was given the chance to divide the candy bars ("actual social conduct").

Damon discovered that the choices in real-life reasoning

were similar to those in hypothetical reasoning; however, neither was strongly related to the choices observed in actual social conduct. Damon concluded: "From the present set of findings, predicting a child's social conduct from his reasoning remains a complex and risky task" (p. 116). Like the Hartshorne and May implication that actual moral behavior may vary from situation to situation, Damon's finding suggests that a competing variable--namely, self-interest in this case--may play an important role in real-life moral action choice.

Another difficulty in studying the judgment-action relationship is the knowledge that one particular action can be made for a variety of reasons or justifications. It is not sufficient simply to discover what moral action a person might perform or espouse. One must also know this person's reasons for making such a choice. The Haan, Block and Smith study (1968), for example, showed that sitting in a university protest may be an act of "civil disobedience" for a "Stage 5" student, while a "Stage 2" student might also sit in "to get back at the university which steals his money."

Given these issues, Candee and Kohlberg (1979) have analyzed studies that focus the moral judgment-moral action relationship in experiments which delineate stage or level-specific thinking. These studies were designed so that a particular action choice was directly related to a particular level of moral reasoning. The researchers focused closely on the subjects' operative moral justifications, a step beyond Kohlberg's initial method of using hypothetical moral dilemmas which tap more reflective thinking. Candee and Kohlberg examined studies that showed there were specific instances in which the researcher could predict what a subject's moral action choice, either by verbal affirmation or actual performance, would be. In order to make this prediction, the researcher first had to ascertain the subject's stage or level of moral development by a moral judgment measure.

For example, in one research study, Kohlberg (1970) discovered that 85% of post-conventional subjects did not administer the full shock level in the Milgram experiment, while more than 50% of the conventional subjects did. This finding is consistent with Kohlberg's theory in that post-conventional thinkers would tend to respect the concern for human welfare, while conventional thinkers would be more likely to perform as "good" lab students and to honor their agreement with the researcher.

McNamee (1973) discovered that post-conventional subjects were more likely than conventional subjects to break an agreement or contract with the researcher when confronted (on the spot) by another subject in need of medical attention. In addition, post-conventional subjects were more willing to assist the student in obtaining medical attention. In another study, Krebs and Kohlberg (1973) discovered that 81% of Stage I school children cheated on a

specially-designed task as compared with only 20% of students at Stage 5.

Candee (1976) chose to investigate the relationship between moral reasoning and moral action choice in a slightly different way. Rather than requiring a subject to act or behave in a certain manner, Candee asked subjects to make judgments about the "rightness" of certain action choices of others. He selected subjects from a variety of colleges throughout the country and gave Kohlberg's Moral Judgment Interview to each person to determine level of moral reasoning. He then presented each with a questionnaire about the cases of Watergate and Lt. Calley. Several questions were designed, each of which could be argued from a different moral perspective. Candee used such questions as:

Do you approve or disapprove of Lt. Calley's having been brought to trial?

Do you consider Calley guildy or innocent of murder?

Should the Watergate defendents have been allowed to conduct a public campaign to raise money for their defense?

If impeachment alone were held today, based on what you know at this time, would you be for or against impeachment?

Subjects recorded their own "Yes or No" responses to every item on the questionnaire. Candee than constructed a chi square table using the "Yes or No" response for each question and the subjects' stages of moral reasoning as ascertained by the Moral Judgment Interview.

What Candee discovered was that "persons at each higher stage of moral structure more often made choices that were consistent with human rights and less often chose alternatives which were designed to maintain conventions or institutions" (p. 1293). Candee referred to this pattern as "a monotonic trend of endorsement which suggests that moral structure or reasoning, at least partially, determines moral choice" (p. 1299).

Candee's work signaled the importance of two criteria for constructing questions involving moral reasoning and action choice. First, each dilemma must have only one action choice which can be argued from a post-conventional point of view, one which extends human rights and maximizes human welfare. Second, subjects must be given all important factual information within the dilemma to minimize distortion of the specifics of the case.

DESIGN

The research was designed to engage school administrators in operative moral reasoning which closely approximated the immediate judgment-action dynamic in

real-life decisionmaking. Toward this end, an interview protocol (The Moral Action Choice Test) was designed and piloted. Respondents were confronted with dilemmas which paralleled real-life, every day situations. Each subject was forced to make choices among given action alternatives. Action choices were formulated in a manner consistent with the Candee criteria.

The dilemmas and action choices were presented in face-to-face interviews. In this context, the researchers were able to explore issues and patterns within each subject's reasoning. Subjects were free to provide open-ended as well as bounded responses to questions. Rest (1976a) notes the importance of this last feature:

> When research is at the groundbreaking stage, the open-ended method has the advantage of allowing the subject to express his thinking freely and the researcher to inductively formulate scoring categories (for moral development) after the subject has provided the necessary raw material. In order to find out what people actually think without prejudging the case, the free-response method is an essential first step (p. 205).

Two sets of questions were asked in each interview: first, what should be done in each case; second, what would be done if the subject were actually in that situation and had to make a decision.

The interviewer also sought to observe first-hand the subject's manner of response, level of engagement, and type of affect. The intent was to determine from a multi-dimensional body of data what the subjects' moral reasoning "looked like" when they faced lifelike, occupationally-relevant dilemmas. Subjects also responded to Rest's Defining Issues Test. This instrument was employed as a measure of moral development.

HYPOTHESES

Hypothesis 1: There is a systematic association between respondents' scores on the Defining Issues Test (DIT) and their choices on the Moral Action Choice Test (MACT).

As Candee and Kohlberg (1979) discovered, subjects at higher stages of moral development use thinking which extends rights and maximizes human welfare. Higher stage thinkers are more likely than lower stage thinkers to choose action alternatives which extend these rights. Thus, we expected to find a significant relationship between scores on the DIT and choices (both "should" and "would") in response to the MACT.

Hypothesis 2: The discrepancy between should and would

responses to the MACT would be greater among subjects in the Middle Range of the DIT than among subjects in the Low and High ranges.

For pre-conventional thinkers, those in the Low Range of the DIT--equivalent to Kohlberg's Stages 1 and 2--the theoretical prediction is that there will be little discrepancy between what the respondent says he should do and what he says he would do when faced with a moral dilemma. Both responses should ignore issues of human rights or welfare and concentrate, instead, on issues such as authority and control: e.g., "The teachers have no right to disagree and, as principal, I would not allow them to disagree."

A should-would consistency can also be expected to characterize the responses of subjects at the post-conventional stages of moral development. This consistency, however, is based upon self-chosen principles rather than upon situational variables. A post-conventional person should not only support an action choice which maximizes welfare or extends human rights but should also claim that he would behave that way in a real situation.

The theory, however, suggests a different should-would position for the conventional thinker (i.e., for the person whose score on the DIT is in the Middle Range). In discussing the relationship between moral judgment and moral action, Lickona (1976) depicted conventional morality as "involving inconsistency by definition." A person at this stage of moral development can be expected to change his behavior to conform to the situational definition of "the right thing to do." Thus, a respondent at the conventional level might acknowledge that a particular action is "right" (e.g., that the principal should support the teachers' right to disagree) but also indicate that, in the actual situation, he would not allow the teachers to disagree with a curriculum change ordered by the Superintendent.

Hypothesis 3: There will be no significant relationship between the DIT score and responses to items on the MACT which do not tap critical moral issues.

In order to examine the validity of the Candee criteria for item construction, some questions were systematically included which did not tap moral issues. The rationale here was that if there are certain questions which can be designed to discriminate between levels of moral thinking, then there are also questions which can be designed not to meet the theoretically-derived criteria of maximizing human welfare and extending individual rights. If follows that these non-critical questions on the MACT should not discriminate among subjects in different ranges of the DIT. This test seemed crucial not only to an assessment of the Candee criteria but, more importantly, to the central theoretical construct of the "moral dilemma," itself.

SAMPLE

A sample of fifty school administrators was chosen for the purposes of this study. The research began by interviewing known school administrators. Each was asked to recommend potential participants. Those named were contacted by telephone to explain the nature of the study and the requirements for participation.

Participation was voluntary. Those who became involved in the study represented school districts which varied in size and location. Participants occupied administrative positions which ranged from superintendents to assistant principals. Both elementary and secondary administrators were included.

TEST PROCEDURES

Each subject was mailed a copy of the DIT along with a cover letter and directions. Once completed by the respondent, the DIT was sealed in an envelope and held until the time of the interview.

At the time of the interview, the envelope containing the DIT was collected. The sealed envelopes were forwarded directly to a research clerk in order to assure that the interview data were collected and analyzed independently of the DIT results. Also at the time of the interview, each respondent completed an Informed Consent Form and a Biographical Data Sheet.

At the start of the interview, the participant was given a copy of the MACT. The respondent and the interviewer read together through the directions so that the directions and definitions were clear and mutually agreed upon. When the respondent had finished reading the first dilemma, the interviewer posed the action choice questions. The respondent was able to refer to his own copy of the test during this procedure.

The respondent was asked two sets of questions for each statement or scenario: (1) What should the action choice be in each case?, and (2) What would his action choice be if he were actually involved in the situation? The interviewer recorded all answers on a data collection sheet. The interviewer also recorded any extended answers given and any issues or considerations raised by the respondent. Respondents were encouraged as part of the procedure to give extended answers and to raise extenuating issues and considerations. The interviewer also observed and recorded respondents' non-verbal behavior (e.g., response time, indicators of affect, method of response). These procedures were repeated for the second dilemma as well.

After each interview, a written record was made and filed of all interview data. Qualitative data were evaluated and coded.

RESULTS

Quantitative Results

Distribution of Scores on the DIT

Respondents' scores on the DIT ranged from 5% P to 74% P. [*] Scores were divided into three ranges. The distribution of scores among the ranges is shown in Table 1. Reference is made to these ranges throughout the paper.

Range	DIT Scores (% P)	Number of Respondents
Low	0-35	12
Middle	36-53	18
High	54-74	20

Table 1. Distribution of DIT scores.

Analysis of Hypothesis 1

Data are summarized in Table 2 which describe the distribution of action choices by respondents classified on the basis of their DIT scores. The results are consistent with the hypothesis that that there is a systematic association between the action choices made in response to the problems posed in the MACT and level of moral development among school administrators as measured by their responses to the hypothetical dilemmas of the DIT.

[*] A %P score refers to the amount of post-conventional (principled) thinking a respondent uses in answering the DIT.

DIT Score	Lower Moral Reasoning Choice	Discrepancy	Higher Moral Reasoning Choice
Low Range	98	22	60
Middle Range	99	21	150
High Range	82	39	179

(n = 750 responses for 15 questions)

$$X^2 = 42.3\ **$$
$$d.f. = 4$$
$$p = <.001$$

Table 2. Composite Results of Responses to Both Dilemmas of the MACT.

Analyses were also performed on data associated with <u>each</u> of the two individual dilemmas.

<u>Dilemma No. 1: Superintendent's Directive</u>. Briefly stated, a principal has received a directive from the Superintendent that all schools were to use the same reading (A. L. Series) "in order to standardize the curriculum." However, a group of teachers familiar with the A. L. Series has found it to be ineffective in working with lower-level reading groups and thought that standardizing the reading program would deal a severe blow to the progress made from using an individualized, multibasal approach. Teachers were upset, also, that the Superintendent had made his decision based on book publishers' advice and not on their own professional judgment. Therefore, they had asked the principal <u>not</u> to implement the A. L. Series, i.e., to ignore the Superintendent's directive.

DIT Score	Lower Moral Reasoning Choice	Discrepancy	Higher Moral Reasoning Choice
Low Range	64	17	51
Middle Range	58	18	122
High Range	54	30	136

(n = 550 responses for 11 questions)

$X^2 = 27.1$ **
d.f. = 4
p = <.001

Table 3. Distribution of Responses to Dilemma 1 of the MACT.

Dilemma No. 2: Cheating. This dilemma involves a situation in which an angry parent called the principal to state that his/her child had been accused unfairly of cheating on a test. The teacher had given the student an automatic zero for opening a textbook during the test. The student claimed that he had only been looking for his notebook to write down the homework assignment. The parent asked how fair it was to receive a zero just for pulling out a notebook.

The principal agreed to meet with the parent and, in the meantime, he discovered the teacher had established a rule at the beginning of the term that no books were to be taken out of the the desks during a test or the offending student would receive a zero. As was the case with the first dilemma, the principal was "in the middle," this time between the teacher's automatice zero rule and an accusation by the parent that the rule was not fair and the student had not cheated.

DIT Score	Lower Moral Reasoning Choice	Discrepancy	Higher Moral Reasoning Choice
Low Range	34	5	9
Middle Range	41	3	28
High Range	28	9	43

(n = 200 responses for 4 questions)

$X^2 = 19.9$ **
d.f. = 4
p = <.001

Table 4. Distribution of Responses to Dilemma 2.

The results shown in Tables 3 and 4 suggest no significant differences between the two dilemmas taken independently in accounting for the composite results (cf., Table 2).

Analysis of Hypothesis 2

Contrary to the hypothesis that conventional thinkers would display a significantly greater number of should-would discrepancies than pre- or post-conventional thinkers, the results summarized in Table 5 show no significant differences among the three groups of respondents.

DIT Score	Discrepant Answers	Non-Discrepant Answers
Low Range	22 (12%)	158 (88%)
Middle Range	21 (8%)	249 (92%)
High Range	39 (13%)	261 (87%)

(n = 750 responses for 15 questions)

$X^2 = 4.4$
d.f. = 2
p = <.20 (N.S.)

Table 5. Distribution of Should-Would Discrepancies among Responses to the Two Dilemmas of the MACT.

Analysis of Hypothesis 3

This hypothesis was a test of the Candee criteria, which implicitly reflect characteristic patterns of action choices in the several stages of moral development. The MACT contained two types of questions: one designed to meet the Candee criteria; another which did not meet these criteria (i.e., which did not tap critical moral issues).

There were eight of these non-critical questions, four with each dilemma. They were interspersed with the critical questions and were written in the same format. In each case, the respondent was asked to agree or disagree. Following are the non-critical questions by item number:

Question 2: Before making his decision, the principal should consider the long-term and short-term effects of the directive on his staff.

Question 7: The bottom line for any decision for any student should be the welfare of the students.

Question 9: The principal should resolve the situation before the new term begins.

Question 15: Whatever the decision, the principal should do what he thinks is right.

Question 18: The teacher should have rules against cheating in the classroom.

Question 20: In this case, the punishment should fit the crime.

Question 22: During the parent conference, the principal should allow the parent to express her concern.

Question 25: The principal should meet with the parent after school in case he needs more time for discussion.

The expectation was that most respondents would agree with these "rational management guidelines" and that there would be no systematic association between subjects' responses and their stages of moral development as measured by the DIT.

The results shown in Table 6, summarizing the differences in action choices on the non-critical questions, contrast sharply with results discussed earlier on the critical questions. Results on the critical questions (i.e., those formulated on the basis of the Candee criteria) suggested a systematic association between level of moral development and the nature of action choice in response to a situation involving a moral dilemma. As predicted, however, this association is not evident in the distribution of action choices in response to questions not involving critical moral issues (see Table 6).

DIT Score	Disagree	Discrepancy	Agree
Low Range	14	2	80
Middle Range	11	3	130
High Range	15	2	160

(n = 400 responses for 8 questions)

$X^2 = 6.0$
d.f. = 4
p = <.20 (N.S.)

Table 6. Distribution of Responses to the Non-Critical Questions.

Summary of Quantitative Results

A Chi Square analysis of responses to the critical questions showed a significant relationship between moral development (as measured on the DIT) and the moral content of action choices on the MACT. These "critical" questions were those formulated in a manner consistent with the Candee criteria (Candee, 1976). They distinguished between actions which maximized individual rights and social welfare

(post-conventional values) vs. values associated with lower levels of moral development. Highly significant results were obtained in response to two problematic situations, one dealing with a controversial directive by the Superintendent, the other dealing with alleged cheating by a student.

Our results also added support to the construct validity of the Candee criteria. As indicated, questions based on those criteria elicited responses which distinguished subjects according to their level of moral development (see Tables 2-4). In contrast, however, questions formulated purposively not to meet those criteria elicited responses which showed no significant association with the subjects' level of moral development (see Table 6).

Our data failed to support the hypothesis that the number of discrepancies between what respondents thought they should do and what they suggested they would do would be greatest among those at the conventional stage of moral development. Results indicated no significant differences in the number of should-would discrepancies among respondents at different levels of moral development (see Table 5).

Qualitative Results

Certain common themes were evident in respondents' open-ended answers given during the course of the Moral Action Choice Test. Many of these themes reflect directly upon the properties of moral stage development which Kohlberg has outlined. In addition, there are other ideas which will suggest directions for future research.

One of the more interesting observations by the interviewer was the high level of interest expressed by the respondents in the research topic. All but one person agreed to be part of the sample when originally contacted about the nature of the study. Almost 75% of those interviewed requested copies of the results.

Another observation was that the administration of the MACT through face-to-face meetings was an effective method to observe participants as they were "thinking out loud." The interview stimulated free and open-ended responses. Over 80% of the participants stated voluntarily that they had been involved in these types of situations, spontaneously produced their own dilemmas, or expounded upon personal issues within the dilemmas.

On the average, respondents from the low DIT range completed the interview in forty-five minutes, those from the middle range completed the interview in fifty minutes, and those from the high range took an average of fifty-five minutes to complete the interview. These differences, supported by the interviewer's observations, suggest that higher-level thinkers were involved with more complex

issues.

Characteristics of Moral Reasoning:
Open-Ended Responses

Results of the quantitative analysis of responses to the MACT were consistent with the hypothesis of association between moral reasoning and espoused moral action choices. However, it is also important that many of the stage properties which Kohlberg (1971) has described were also observed in the respondents' extended answers.

Respondents in the Low Range often chose courses of action and gave extended answers which appealed to authority, control and fear of retribution. Respondents in the Middle Range made choices based upon maintenance of convention, rules and procedures, and avoidance of controversy. In general, respondents in both the Low and Middle Ranges did not describe these situations as "moral dilemmas." By contrast, High Range respondents were more concerned with issues of due process, individual rights and social welfare. They generally described the situations as moral dilemmas, as involving competing claims about what was "right."

To illustrate the issues of authority and control in pre-conventional thinking, one respondent in the Low Range gave the following explanation:

> In the first dilemma, I would implement the Superintendent's directive since I received a direct order.... Yes, the principal should control his staff, but he can't stifle them since this is a professional matter.... I'd go with the decision and try to convince the Superintendent he was wrong, but without controversy.... I'm an old army man, and that's the problem. Why? Because you follow orders.... This is not a moral dilemma. I'd follow orders like a good trooper.

Another Low Range respondent said:

> In this first dilemma, the principal should follow the directive since he is in the chain of command.... If you mean that allowing the teachers to disagree actively is subverting the authority of the Superintendent, then the principal should not allow such disagreement.

For the second dilemma, another Low Range respondent discussed the issue of authority:

> I'd give a zero to the student, but not for the reasons given. The student defied a rule.... This is not a moral dilemma. The decision has been made. You try to make it work. That's the situation.

Respondents in the Low Range of the DIT also revealed the importance of the Superintendent's authority in response to Question 5 of the MACT: What is the importance of these issues for the principal in this situation? (1) Superintendent's authority (2) Need for consistency in the curriculum (3) Student's welfare (4) Principal's ability to control his staff.

Fifty-eight percent of respondents in the Low Range ranked "Superintendent's authority" most important. This compares with 28% of respondents in the Middle Range and only 5% of respondents in the High Range. Conversely, 65% of respondents in the High Range ranked "Superintendent's authority" as least important, compared with 61% of respondents in the Middle Range and 33% of respondents in the Low Range.

For respondents in the Middle Range, the key issues of following rules and procedures is illustrated by the following responses to the "cheating" situation:

> (1) Was the student aware of the rule? Was it fairly and uniformly applied? I have no complaint with the rule.... This is an administrative dilemma, not a moral dilemma. The rule is not morally wrong, but the implementation of the rule created the problem.... The rule for the sake of the rule must be enforced.
>
> (2) If the rule is clearly delineated with no exceptions, then it's a zero.... You only back the teacher if the teacher is right. The teacher is right here because the student could have raised his hand for permission to pull out his notebook. It's a dilemma, but not a moral dilemma. In most cases, it's the teacher's word vs. the student's word. Even if the teacher is wrong, you have to uphold his credibility.... It's a problem, not a dilemma.

For these two respondents, representative of many persons in the Middle Range, there was significant importance attached to prior knowledge of the rule and consistency of enforcement. Because "the rules are the rules," a call by the angry parent of the student may have precipitated an "administrative problem" but not a "moral dilemma."

On the other hand, the analysis of answers from respondents in the High Range, indicative of Kohlberg's post-conventional level of moral reasoning, showed that these respondents more often made action choices based on the extension of individual rights, due process and social welfare. They generally described the problem situations as "moral dilemmas." Unlike persons in the Low and Middle Ranges, High Range respondents were less concerned about issues of authority and control, minimizing controversy, or maintaining rules and implementing policies without first questioning the purposes of such rules.

The answers of one High Range respondent typify the issues in post-conventional moral reasoning:

> In the first dilemma, I would try to get the ear of the Superintendent to discuss the problem he's created with such a simplistic solution. The unilateral decision will destroy teacher morale. The teachers are the experts, not the Superintendent.... I'm not sure what control is and what consistency means. If the students' welfare is at stake, I don't see how the principal could lose out. This is not a win-lose situation.
>
> In the second dilemma, the student would not receive a zero. The punishment is far too severe. We don't know if the student committed a crime; we only know that he broke a rule. The question is, "Is justice being served?" What has happened in the past is not important. What is fair for this student now? This is a moral dilemma because we are dealing with student rights and other rights and because of different values which vary from roles and individuals.

Another High Range respondent provided the following comment in response to the "cheating" situation:

> For this dilemma, the student has a right of due process here. I'm not sure there is a crime. In this case, the principal's obligation is that the school as a totality should function as justice for all. The teacher's rule would not be upheld; it's the "unjust law."

In answering the question concerning the depiction of these situations as "moral dilemmas," one High Range participant provided the following response:

> What is a moral dilemma? A moral dilemma exists if clear values are involved. I wouldn't say I believe in situational ethics, but what you do in one context might be different in another. I don't think values change. I think it's the actions I'd take to change, but not the values.

Answers from respondents in the High Range were consistent with Candee's finding that people at the post-conventional level of moral development more often made action choices based on the extension of individual rights and less often on the maintenance of convention (Candee, 1976). Also, the finding that High Range respondents characterized these situations as "moral dilemmas" more frequently than other respondents is consistent with Candee and Kohlberg's rationale (1979):

> Moral situations are defined by the actor in terms of specific rights and duties attendant to that situation.... The reason for the observed monotonic trend in moral behavior and choice is due to the fact

> that principled (post-conventional) subjects reason about moral dilemmas using considerations that philosophers accept as being morally relevant (pp. 53-54).

There were two additional features of post-conventional thinking which were observed in respondents' extended answers to questions in the MACT. The first was the element of reflection. High Range respondents tended to be more reflective about what they actually would have done in situations of perceived conflict. Gibbs (1978) also described this reflective element. He sees it as the person's ability to "disembed oneself from an implicit worldview and adopt a detached and questioning posture." Many respondents in the High Range expressed this sense of detachment in reflecting upon their own answers:

> (1) I wonder what I'd do. I wonder how I would present the directive to the staff. I didn't say I was good. I would do what was expedient sometimes. I'm not always of the highest moral character.
>
> (2) Ten years ago I would have answered and done differently. Now I'd weigh things more....
>
> (3) Boy, I sound like a jerk. My answers make me sound like a company man. You have to be sometimes, I guess....
>
> (4) I think a few years ago I would have followed rules more. Now I question rules. Each (person) has to find out what the truth is for himself. You search more ... and you become less narrow and more flexible.

Another related feature in higher-level reasoning was the element of cognitive complexity. Most respondents in the High Range were not committed to simplistic solutions. They often weighed the consequences of each action choice and considered different viewpoints before making a decision. As mentioned earlier, this may be one reason why High Range respondents took the most time during the interview. Often their explanations were reasons as opposed to simple rules for action. Of particular importance to respondents in the High Range was the issue of process. This is illustrated in the following examples:

> (1) A moral dilemma means working through the situation. Everyone gets to learn. It's not a yes or no answer until you work through it. Morality is working through these things....
>
> (2) ... Rules in the classroom? It might be necessary. However, I think the teacher should try to foster non-cheating, that she should not compare students or (these comparisons) to grades. As a teacher, I would try to foster the value of non-cheating by creating this type of atmosphere.

> (3) Should the principal back the decision of his teacher? That's the real dilemma. I'm in the middle in this situation. I'd try to get the teacher to understand that just because there is a rule, it doesn't mean that the student is guilty. The rule is not fair.... I don't think that consistency is as important as most think. It's not as important as looking at each case.

In contrast to this element of cognitive complexity among High Range thinkers, respondents in the Middle Range often suggested more simplistic ways to resolve problematic situations. In certain instances these "espoused theories-in-action," as Argyris and Schoen (1978) would describe them, appeared as formulas which respondents could apply generically to situations such as those posed in the MACT. Two representative Middle Range responses to the "Superintendent's Directive" problem follow:

> (1) My personal philosophy is line-staff. I believe that the principal is in a line position, that he can professionally disagree. I want their judgments. With authority comes respect....
>
> (2) The ultimate test for any decision is first, what's best for kids; second, what's best for teachers; third, for administrators.... Credibility lies in getting the truth.... This is the confusion between hindsight and foresight.

Similar kinds of reactions typified Middle Range responses to the "Cheating Dilemma":

> (1) The principal should meet first with the teacher, then with the teacher and parent, then with the teacher, parent and student....
>
> (2) I would support the teacher if (a) rules were established; (b) if all adhere to the rules; and (c) if there is consistency of enforcement.

The important features in the above cases were the simplicity of thought and the immediacy with which respondents applied "formulas" to problematic situations. This Middle Range dynamic among respondents in this study seemed consistent with Kohlberg's description of conventional morality and its concern with rules and procedures. High Range thinkers, on the other hand, seemed more concerned with the complexity of the issues. They exhibited less commitment to simple, pre-designed courses of action.

Multi-Level Response Patterns

Comparisons between respondents' DIT scores and their extended responses to the MACT suggested that many reasoned morally at more than one level of moral development. For example, 30% of the respondents who scored in the High Range of the DIT gave answers on the MACT that reflected a greater concern for rule consistency and order (conventional values) and less concern for extending individual rights (post-conventional values).

There are two explanations for multi-level moral reasoning. One has to do with the nature of moral reasoning itself. As Rest (1976a) has shown, one particular stage of thought does not disappear completely before another stage begins to appear. Thus, it should not be unusual for a person to use mixed-stage thinking. Levine (in prep.) has made a similar argument. He suggests that moral reasoning is best understood through an additive-inclusive rather than a stage displacement model. The additive-inclusive model describes "a process of stage acquisition in which higher stages include components of earlier stages but do not replace these stages" (p. 12).

A second explanation is related to the recognition aspect of the DIT. Whereas Kohlberg's interview protocol asks respondents to produce statements of justification spontaneously, the DIT presents respondents with pre-formulated choices and asks them to choose among them that which most closely approximates his own reasoning.

Rest, Turiel and Kohlberg (1969) have shown that the same respondent may recognize statements of moral reasoning at a higher level than he can produce. Alozie (1976) and Rest (1976a) also showed that respondents scored higher on the DIT, a recognition test, than they scored on Kohlberg's Moral Interview, a production test. Rest concluded that recognition precedes production of moral justification.

In the MACT there were elements of both recognition and action choice from a given set of potential responses; then the respondent produced justification spontaneously for that decision. Since both recognition and production tasks were required of subjects in the work reported, it should not be surprising to find examples of reasoning by individual respondents at multiple levels of moral development.

In most instances where a respondent scored in one range on the DIT but provided justifications on the MACT at a different level of reasoning, the recognition response was at a higher level than the production response. This finding, consistent with the work of Rest and Alozie described earlier, is illustrated in the following response to the "Cheating Dilemma" from a High Range respondent:

> Before I answer, there are some questions here. Has the School Committee approved this rule and filed it with the State Department of Education? If it's not

> filed, you'd have some advocate lawyer down your throat. If the rule is not filed and promulgated, I'd have the student retake the test. If it's a teacher-made rule only, then the rule is unfair (since) it's against Massachusetts law.... This is not a moral dilemma. It can't be a moral dilemma. I have the law with me. Due process means the rules are on file....

Even though this respondent scored in the High Range (post-conventional level), his spontaneous response emphasizes procedure, rule and law. These are values which mark conventional thought.

Another respondent, though, produced responses to the MACT which seems to raise some doubts about whether recognition of higher level moral reasoning necessarily precedes spontaneous production. This respondent scored in the Middle Range on the DIT. Yet many of his open-ended responses to the MACT appeared to be founded on post-conventional values:

> [Response to the "Superintendent's Directive Dilemma] In this first dilemma, this may be a moral dilemma for most, but for me to the greater good, it's not a moral dilemma for me to act this way. The law is consistent, but is consistency reality? I say not.
>
> [Response to the "Cheating Dilemma"] ... If I went by the law, then yes, the student would receive a zero. But what about due process? I'd have to have due process for the student and the teacher....

It's not clear why spontaneously produced moral justifications in this case were at a higher level than recognized justifications preferred in responding to the DIT. There is some suggestion in the following statement which he made about the DIT that differences between it and the MACT may have triggered for him two different response sets:

> In answering the questionnaire (DIT), if I answered by the law, it's truly one way, but if I answered by me, it may be different. I took it at face value.

This case seems to suggest, even as a single case, that the relationship between recognition and spontaneous production requires further scrutiny. Some planned interventions (cf., Mosher, 1978) have been designed on the assumption that recognition precedes production of higher level moral reasoning.

OTHER ISSUES

The Should-Would Discrepancy: Further Thoughts on the Second Hypothesis

Conventional morality is defined in part as the "inconsistency" between thought and action. More precisely, a person at the conventional level is concerned about "doing the right thing." Outward appearance, credibility and reputation are important issues for this person. Thus, one changes his social conduct to do what everyone else does or to do what is expected of him. He may have his own moral code, but social pressures do not allow him to take his own morality to the level of action.

This is in marked contrast to post-conventional behavior. The post-conventional person operates out of self-chosen principles. These principals are internally constructed rather than externally imposed. People at this level of moral development feel a press to be self-consistenc.

Consistent with the theoretical inconsistency of conventional morality (reflected in the Middle Range of the DIT), we hypothesized that Middle Range respondents would evidence more frequent discrepancies between what they thought was right and what they said they would actually do. It was anticipated that post-conventional respondents (High Range) would be guided more by self-chosen principles and that, therefore, they would generate fewer instances of should-would discrepancy. It was further anticipated that pre-conventional (Low Range) respondents would find a should-would consistency in the authority and control values associated with that level of moral development and that they, too, would display few discrepancies.

However, the results did not confirm the predicted response pattern (Table 5, Supra, p. 16). Why so? Although it is difficult to make solid inferences, two explanations seem cogent.

For one, it appears that using occupationally relevant dilemmas and asking respondents to think about what they actually would do in such a realistic situation more closely approximates moral reasoning in real life than did the response situations used in earlier research. Respondents in our study appeared to differ in their definition of what "should" actually meant. Three different definitions appeared to be used by different respondents: (1) what was most fair or just, (2) what was socially desirable or expected and (3) what was pragmatic or strategic. Thus, the test of the hypothesis turned out to be ambiguous.

The nature of respondents' extended responses to the should-would question seems to raise another important issue with respect to Kohlbergian theory. The finding of a

significant relationship between DIT scores and action choices suggests that in any case of discrepancy the "should" response will be at the higher level of moral reasoning. Kohlberg (1971) has asserted the empirical existence of this very phenomenon. He has found, he says, that "it is typical that there is a 'right' choice at Stage 5 that is also verbally endorsed by most subjects at lower stages" (Candee and Kohlberg, 1979).

The implication here is that the discrepancy can be expected to be unidirectional. This was true in some cases. For example, one person said, in response to the "Superintendent's Directive Dilemma":

> The student's welfare should be the most important issue, but the Superintendent's authority would be.... The principal should allow the teacher to propose an alternative (course of action), but I would order her to follow the Superintendent's directive.

Other respondents responded in a similar vein:

> (1) I'm between a rock and a hard place. I don't like either answer. I would document the teacher's insubordination (if she refused to follow the directive), but it's a weak way out. The principal is letting the Superintendent handle it.
>
> (2) The principal should not enforce the curriculum change, although in the actual case, I would enforce the change.
>
> (3) The principal should continue to hold to his original decision. I would like to think I would, but I probably would be pulled (into changing the decision to in line with others).

In many instances of discrepancy, however, the should response was not always at a higher level of moral reasoning than the would response. One example of a High Range respondent's systematic choice of "should" as a lower level response is reflected in the following:

> The principal should (make his decision) in line with others in order to be effective. However, I would stick to my decision (not to implement the curriculum change).... The principal should order the teacher to use the A. L. Series, but I would allow her to use an alternative.... The principal should minimize controversy, but I wouldn't.... The student should receive a grade of zero, but if I were principal, the student would not get a zero.

When asked why there was a distinction between the should and the would responses, this respondent replied:

> I would not implement the curriculum change, but I should.... I couldn't go against my own beliefs.... I

> couldn't be a principal for very long. A principal has to go along with rules of the organization and the decisions of others (although I would not).... In the first dilemma, I would be insubordinate by making my feelings known. In the second dilemma, the teacher's rule creates distrust.... I'd automatically support the student.

This respondent was not alone in describing his would responses at a higher level than his should responses. The common theme among such respondents is that they described the situation (e.g., role expectations) as the source of what they should do and their own values as the source of what they would do. The following responses exemplify this theme:

> (1) For should it's more theoretical. For would it's based on my own personal values. Should is what is expected of you.
>
> (2) Should is what I would do professionally. Would is what I would do personally.

Levine (in preparation) argues that it is important to distinguish between stage acquisition and stage use:

> It can be argued that social experience may encourage the use of a stage of reasoning other than the most advanced stage a person is capable of using. For example, someone who has acquired a Stage 5 capability may not use it when its use suggests behavior incompatible with the role he occupies and values.... (p. 5)

Our data make it clear, consistent with Levine's reasoning, that certain respondents, even from the High Range, have defined what should be done in conventional terms, based upon role expectations and conformity. The ability to predict the particular stage of reasoning a respondent might actually use could be enhanced by knowledge of the "stage of moral development" of the institution or organization within which the person is role embedded.

The dimension of "moral atmosphere" has been a current topic of interest for certain settings such as the classroom (Gerety, 1979), the "just community" school (Wasserman, 1977), the kibbutz (Reimer, 1972) and prisons (Scharf and Hickey, 1976). What this body of research suggests is that there is both an institutional and a personal definition of "should." Even though a person feels that he should make a particular action choice, the organization may "dictate" another.

In response to occupationally relevant problem situations, even a person whose thinking in general is strongly informed by post-conventional values may (1) act conventionally in contradiction to a perceived should based on a higher level of moral reasoning or (2) define the

"should" conventionally in terms of the social context and perceive his higher level actions as discrepant with this conventionally determined should.

Both such scenarios define the person into a discrepant situation (i.e., into a dilemma). Of theoretical and research interest are the dynamics that distinguish these scenarios from that in which no discrepancy (and presumably no dilemma) is perceived. Some subjects define both the should and the would at the higher level of moral reasoning. How, for example, do such persons differ from those for whom the situation is a dilemma? How, also, do persons who define the should at the higher level but who act at the lower level differ from those who do the reverse?

Some respondents defined "should" in terms of the pragmatic, the strategic, that which "gets the job done." Baumrind (1978) has considered this definition in her discussion of "pragmatic-moral polarity." In using her Social Cognition Interview, she found it essential "to establish how a respondent views the relationship of pragmatic and moral considerations rather than to presuppose a single developmental sequence" (p. 78). Her findings, based in part on the use of both should and would questions, suggest that respondents who score in the post-conventional range on Kohlberg's test may choose "to exclude practical consequences of what the protagonist ought not do in a given moral dilemma" (p. 79).

As an example of the Baumrind argument, one respondent's resolution of the "Superintendent's Directive Dilemma" was in terms of pragmatism as opposed to justice:

> I don't expect to be right all the time. I don't see these situations as black or white.... It's like picking balls out of a hat. It's not wrong to pick the black one. It's a question of whether the damn thing works.

The main point of this discussion is to understand how a respondent defined the "right thing to do." How does a person think about moral action choices in situations which resemble real life? Two important questions suggest themselves as a focus for continuing study: (1) To what extent do situational variables , when they are salient to the actor (as in real situations or in highly realistic simulations), outweigh concerns for higher values even for post-conventional thinkers and (2) To what extent do situational variables become determinants of moral action?

To what extent, for example, does the post-conventional thinker, embedded in an organization dominated by conventional values really face dilemmas the conventional thinker in such an organization is not required to face? By way of contrast, imagine an organization dominated by post-conventional values. Is it reasonable to suggest that in such an organization it would be the conventional thinkers who would find themselves facing the more difficult

moral dilemmas?

The Definition of Moral Issues

Responses to two questions in particular highlight the association between moral development and the very act of defining or perceiving what is and what is not a moral dilemma. These questions are those which asked the respondents directly whether they felt that the "Superintendent's Directive Dilemma" and the "Cheating Dilemma" were, in fact, dilemmas at all. The distribution of responses to these questions is displayed in the Tables 7 and 8.

DIT Score	Lower Moral Reasoning Choice	Discrepancy	Higher Moral Reasoning Choice
Low Range	8	0	4
Middle Range	7	2	9
High Range	2	4	14

$$\chi^2 = 10.8\ *$$
$$d.f. = 4$$
$$p = <.05$$

Table 7. Distribution of Responses to the Question: "Is the Superintendent's Directive Problem Situation a Moral Dilemma?"

DIT Score	Lower Moral Reasoning Choice	Discrepancy	Higher Moral Reasoning Choice
Low Range	10	2	0
Middle Range	8	0	10
High Range	8	1	11

$$X^2 = 13.2\ **$$
$$d.f. = 4$$
$$p = <.02$$

Table 8. Distribution of Responses to the Question: "Is the Cheating Problem Situation a Moral Dilemma?"

The distribution of responses to these questions suggests that whereas post-conventional thinkers tend to define the problem situations as "moral dilemmas," respondents at lower levels of moral development tend to define them in different terms. Conventional and pre-conventional thinkers tended to see these problems in terms of doing the right thing, the teacher's word against the student's word, or as no conflict at all ("The teacher's rule was clear, the student broke the rule, so the student pays the consequences.").

Respondents who said these were <u>not</u> moral dilemmas commonly referred to them as problems with implementation or as administrative, organizational or professional dilemmas. Two respondents explained why administrators might be reluctant to describe these situations as moral dilemmas. For one, a moral dilemma was "an admission of failure, a botched job." The other suggested that only situations which "fester through time, which were not properly handled the first time, were moral dilemmas."

Such characterizations suggest a <u>pragmatic</u> or strategic definition of a moral dilemma. For some respondents such a dilemma existed only if the strategy failed. What should or should not have happened was based more on strategic assumptions than on questions of justice.

Almost 40% of all respondents in the Low and Middle ranges (compared to 10% among those in the High Range) spoke about their belief that "it's a win or lose world." Although this issue is not one included in Kohlberg's description of moral reasoning, such a world view may, indeed, be important for conventional and pre-conventional

thinkers. Following are some representative assertions of this world view:

> (1) This dilemma is a no win situation.... You've got staff morale (to consider) but the Superintendent is your boss and you have to follow his directive.
>
> (2) If I had to go by the master contract, I would win. One hand washes the other. I don't say to the teachers, "You owe me." It's unsaid and understood.
>
> (3) The hardest thing is if a parent thinks his child is unduly criticized. Then you end up with enemies in the community.
>
> (4) These are tough answers to decide. I want to do what's best for kids, but a practical side (of me) must ask, "Where are the battle lines?" It's a lose-lose situation.
>
> (5) School administrators are not in the business of moral education. It's win or lose....
>
> (6) You have to pick the issues you will bleed for.... You only have so many battles and you can end up giving away your integrity....

SUMMARY

A study was undertaken of fifty school administrators in order to see how Kohlberg's theory of moral development might apply to their day-to-day decision making. Two instruments were used which provided quantitative information from the respondents: Rest's Defining Issues Test (DIT) and Patterson's Moral Action Choice Test (MACT). Respondents were also encouraged to give extended explanations of their thinking about the problems posed. Note was also made of observational data about respondents in the test situation.

Three hypotheses were tested:

Hypothesis 1: There is a systematic association between respondents' scores on the DIT and MACT. Support was found for this hypothesis.

Hypothesis 2: There is a curvilinear association between respondents' scores on the DIT and the number of should-would discrepancies on the MACT such that conventional thinkers will display more frequent discrepancies than pre- or post-conventional thinkers.

The data failed to support this hypothesis. Evidence was found of systematic ambiguities for respondents in construing the meaning of "should."

Hypothesis 3: In contrast to the hypothesized

association between DIT and MACT scores on items which tap critical moral issues, there will be no such association on items which do not do so.

Support was found for this hypothesis.

Both quantitative and qualitative data were brought to bear in discussing a number of theoretical issues raised by the research. Issues included conflicting criteria for construing the should-would discrepancy, the concept of "institutional moral development," the systematic association between moral development and the very definition of moral issues, and the "win-lose" syndrome. Relationships were discussed between our findings and those of other researchers.

IMPLICATIONS

The major implication of the reported study lies in what it suggests about what may be important differences in subject response patterns as posed problems are perceived to be less general and more directly related to the concrete reality of everyday practice. Definitions of what one "should" do appear to be related not only to moral development but to the social context in which decisions are made.

It may be that social situations, as well as individuals, can usefully be thought of as being dominated by values and beliefs associated with stages of moral development. Thus, the interaction between stages of moral development associated with individuals and organizations, for example, may be critical in understanding the relationship between how individuals define what they "should" do and how they do, in fact, act.

There are some suggestions emanating from our research that the should-would relationship is not always unidirectional. That is, it appears that, contrary to important prior thinking, people sometimes define "should" at a lower stage of moral development than they define "would."

The most costly research on moral development studies actual behavior in real-life situations from the perspective of moral development. For example, it seems crucial, in the next stage of research, to understand the relationship between espoused values and actions (in interviews and on pencil-and-paper tests), on the one hand, and actions in practice. Because such research is time-consuming and fraught with methodological problems (how, for example, does one compare the moral content of action across non-standardized situations?), it tends not to be done. Our work suggests that the lack of action research of this type may constitute an important constraint on continued theoretical development.

Finally, not only does it seem important to know more about the relationship between espousal and action, but it seems crucial to go beyond simple description. The next stage of serious theoretical advance in the study of moral development can derive only from a renewed focus on the dynamics of development. In this respect, it seems essential to make clear theoretically how individuals (and organizations?) move from one stage to another. At this time, theoretical statements (e.g., interaction of environment and cognition) seem vague. In this regard, it also seems important to consider the dynamics of regression as well as progression in moral development.

REFERENCES

Alozie, C. An analysis of the interrelationship of two measures used in the measurement of moral judgment development: the Kohlberg Moral Judgment Interview and the Rest Defining Issues Test. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Minnesota, 1976.

Argyris, C. and Schoen, D. Theory in practice: increasing professional effectiveness. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1978.

Baldwin, C. and Baldwin, A. Children's judgment of kindness. Child Development, 1970, 41, 30-47.

Baumrind, D. A dialectical materialist's perspective on knowing social reality. In W. Damon (ed.), New directions for child development. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1978.

Blatt, M. Studies on the effects of classroom discussion upon children's moral development. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Chicago, 1970.

Candee, D. Structure and choice in moral reasoning. Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 1976, 34, 1293-1301.

Candee, D. and Kohlberg, L. Relationships between moral judgment and moral action. Cambridge, Mass.: Moral Education Research Foundation, 1979.

Colby, A. Logical operational limitations on the development of moral judgment. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, Columbia University, 1973.

Colby, A. Values clarification: book review. Harvard Educational Review, 1975, 42, 134-143.

Damon, W. The social world of the child. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1977.

Dewey, J. Moral principles in education. New York: Philosophical Library, 1954.

Di Stefano, A. Teaching moral reasoning about sexual and interpersonal dilemmas. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, Boston University, 1976.

Gibbs, J. Kohlberg's stages of moral judgment: a constructive critique. In Stage theories of cognitive and moral development: criticisms and application, Harvard Educational Review (Reprint No. 13), 1978, 33-51.

Haan, N., Block, J. and Smith M. The moral reasoning of young adults: political-social behavior, family background, and personality correlates. Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 1968, 10, 183-201.

Hartshorne, H. and May, M. Studies in the nature of character. Vol. 1: Studies in deceit. New York: Macmillan, 1928.

Hersh, R., Paolitto, D. and Reimer, J. Promoting moral growth. New York: Longman, 1979. Kohlberg, L. The development of modes of moral thinking and choice in the years ten to sixteen. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Chicago, 1958.

Kohlberg, L. The child as a moral philosopher. Psychology Today, 1968, 7, 25-30.

Kohlberg, L. Stage and sequence: The cognitive-developmental approach to socialization. In D. A. Goslin (ed.), Handbook of socialization theory and research. New York: Rand Mcnally, 1969.

Kohlberg, L. Education for justice: a modern statement of the platonic view. In T. Sizer (ed.), Moral education. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1970.

Kohlberg, L. From is to ought: how to commit the naturalistic fallacy and get away with it in the study of moral development. In T. Mischel (ed.), Cognitive development and epistemology. New York: Academic Press, 1971.

Kohlberg, L. The concepts of developmental psychology as the central guide to education. In M. C. Reynolds (ed.), Psychology and the process of schooling in the next decade. Minneapolis, Minn.: University of Minnesota, 1972.

Kohlberg, L. The moral atmosphere of the school. In P. Scharf (ed.), Readings in moral education. Minneapolis: Winston Press, 1978.

Kohlberg, L. and Kramer, R. Continuities and discontinuities in childhood and adult moral development. Human Development, 1969, 12, 93-120.

Kohlberg, L. and Mayer, R. Development as the aim of education. Harvard Educational Review, 1972, 42, 449-496.

Kohlberg, L. and Turiel, E. Moral development and moral education. In G. S. Lesser (ed.), Psychology and educational practice. Glenview, Ill.: Scott Foresman, 1971.

Kohlberg, L., et al.. Standard from scoring manual. Cambridge, Mass.: Moral Educational Research Foundation, 1975.

LaPiere, R. Attitudes vs. actions. In D. Forcese and S. Richer (eds.), Stages of social research: contemporary perspectives. Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1970.

Mosher, R. A democratic high school: damn it, your feet are always wet. In R. Mosher and N. Sprinthall (eds.), Value development. . . as the aim of education. Schenectady, N.Y.: Character Research Press, 1978.

Paolitto, D. Role-taking opportunities for early adolescents: a program in moral education. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, Boston University, 1976.

Piaget, J. The moral judgment of the child. (M. Grabain, Trans.). New York: Free Press, 1965. (First published in English, London: Kegan Paul, 1932).

Rawls, J. A theory of justice. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1971.

Reimer, J. The development of moral character in kibbutz: with special attention to adolescence. Qualifying paper, Harvard University, 1972.

Rest, J. The hierarchical nature of moral judgment. Journal of Personality, 1973, 41, 86-109.

Rest, J. New approaches in the assessment of moral judgment. In T. Lickona (ed.), Moral development and behavior. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1976a.

Rest, J. Moral judgment related to sample characteristics. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota, Burton Hall, 1976b.

Rest, J. Development in judging moral issues. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1979.

Rest, J., Turiel, E., and Kohlberg, L. Level of moral development as a determinant of preference and comprehension of moral judgment made by others. Journal of Personality, 1969, 37, 225-252.

Rundle, L. The stimulation of moral development in the elementary school and the cognitive examination of social experience: a fifth grade study. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, Boston University, 1977.

Scharf, P. and Hickey, J. The prison and the inmate's conception of legal justice. Criminal Justice and Behavior, 1976, 3, June.

Scharf, P., Hickey, J. and Kohlberg, L. Moral stages and their application to work in prisons. Unpublished manuscript, Harvard University, 1973.

Selman, R. The relation of role-taking ability to the development of moral judgment in children. Child Development, 1971, 42, 79-91.

Selman, R. The relation of role-taking levels to stage of moral judgment: a theoretical analysis of empirical studies. Unpublished manuscript, Harvard University, 1973.

Sullivan, P. A program in moral education for adolescents. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, Boston University, 1974.

Wasserman, E. The development of an alternative high school based on Kohlberg's just community approach to education. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, Boston University, 1977.